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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEYDIRECTIONS FOR PREPARING RED-SQUILL RAT BAITS

Red squill has the distinct advantage over other poisons generally used in rat baits that it is eaten readily by rats but is relatively harmless to human beings and domestic animals. It is highly objectionable to most other animals because of its acrid taste, and it also acts as a powerful emetic when taken in quantities that might endanger them.

Red-squill rat poisons are in powdered and liquid forms. The powdered red squill, however, has been found far more toxic to rats and less expensive. Furthermore, it has better keeping qualities and is more readily mixed with a variety of baits.

Red-squill products vary greatly in potency, and for this reason it is necessary to vary the proportion of squill to bait. The following directions, however, will apply to all red-squill products now on the market, so far as known to the Department:

Preparation of baits:

1. Cereals and meals.---Mix together thoroughly 1 part by weight of powdered red squill and 10 parts of any cereal meal, as oatmeal, graham flour, or corn meal. Peanut meal also has been found particularly attractive. Use one teaspoonful for each bait.
2. Butters.---Mix together, or "cream," 1 ounce of powdered red squill and 2 ounces of good butter. Cut a half-pound loaf of bread into very thin slices and spread liberally and evenly with the squill-butter mixture to make "sandwiches." Cut sandwich into six smaller ones for rat baits.
3. Ground meats.---Scatter 1 part, by weight, of powdered red squill over 10 parts of ground meat (hamburger, sausage, etc.), or minced sardines or other fish, and mix thoroughly to insure even distribution. Use half a teaspoonful for each bait.
4. Fruits and vegetables.---With a pepper shaker, dust powdered red squill over thin slices of fresh fruits, stirring or shaking these around as the powder is applied to insure even distribution. An average-sized muskmelon should be cut into about 16 slices and each slice cut into three sections for rat baits of the right size. This will make about 50 baits and will require 1 ounce of red-squill powder. Three apples or tomatoes should be cut similarly into about 16 pieces each and used with 1 ounce of squill powder. Bananas of approximately the same quantity may be sliced or mashed and similarly treated with the squill.

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5. Liquid red squill should be used only with a dry bait that will absorb about double its weight of liquid. Cut half a pound of stale bread into half-inch cubes, place in a clean dish, and pour 1 pint of liquid squill over them. Mix gently with a spoon. Use several cubes for each rat bait.

Distribution of Prepared Baits:

Several of the above-described baits used at the same time should be more effective than any one used singly. It is important that sufficient bait be exposed at one time to destroy all rats on the premises. Set baits in places where rats obtain their food supply, also along runways and other places where evidence of the presence of rats is apparent. Prebaiting by putting out attractive unpoisoned food in such places for a few days previous to placing the poisoned baits adds greatly to success.

Use fresh poisoned baits, put them out in the evening and pick up and destroy them the following morning. In public places, wrap baits in small squares of paper, or place in small paper bags marked "Poison." If all rats are not destroyed at the first attempt, wait ten days or more before repeating with other baits. In the meantime feed clean attractive baits for a few days prior to again putting out squill baits.